

## *Impact Evaluation on Managed Areas and Ecologically Significant Sites*

**The purpose of the study is to determine if changes in TVA's reservoir system operating policies would produce greater overall public value.**

### **Background**

TVA is conducting a formal evaluation of its policies for operating the Tennessee River reservoir system, including an analysis of the economic impacts of any potential changes in these policies. Existing policies affect how much reservoir levels fluctuate, when changes in reservoir levels occur, and the amount of water flowing through the reservoir system at different times of the year, depending on rainfall.

The purpose of the study is to determine if changes in TVA's reservoir system operating policies would produce greater overall public value. Technical analyses will be performed to evaluate the impacts of TVA's current policies and the potential impacts of alternatives on a number of resource areas and other issues.

The two-year Reservoir Operations Study (ROS) is scheduled for completion in October 2003.

The impacts on Managed Areas and Ecologically Significant Sites will be evaluated as part of the ROS, and the results will be documented in an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS). TVA will conduct the study in accordance with National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) requirements.

### **Potential Impacts**

- Managed Areas and Ecologically Significant Sites located along the river corridor could be affected primarily by changes in water flow rates. Examples of such areas include waterfowl habitat, wading bird habitat, and wildflower viewing areas.

### **Geographic Areas**

- Managed Areas include lands such as national, state, and county parks; wildlife management areas; and state and national forests. Biologists and scientists have also identified numerous biologically unique areas, known as Ecologically Significant Sites, along the entire river corridor.
- The geographical area includes the Tennessee River reservoir system and tributaries up to one mile above TVA's reservoir and tailwater areas.

### **Scope of Analysis**

- The potential impact will be analyzed on a waterbody-by-waterbody basis. All areas lying within one mile of full pool will be considered.
- Data will be taken from TVA's Regional Natural Heritage Project database. Additional data will be requested from state natural heritage programs and state and federal agencies.
- The analysis will focus on how reservoir levels would be affected by changes in reservoir management and the relationships these effects would have on Managed Areas or Ecologically Significant Sites.

### **For More Information**

To submit comments or get additional information, members of the public are invited to visit TVA's Web site at [www.tva.com](http://www.tva.com), to call toll-free 888-882-7675, to fax TVA at 865-632-3146, or to write to ROS Project Manager David Nye, Tennessee Valley Authority, c/o WT 11A, 400 West Summit Hill Dr., Knoxville, TN 37902.